

Sherwood Middle School

Proudly serving Shrewsbury's fifth and sixth graders.

"Kids first!"

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STUDENT HANDBOOK

2004 – 2005

This School Agenda belongs to:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TEAM: _____ HR: _____ TEACHER: _____

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Administration Welcome

Summer, 2004

Welcome to Sherwood Middle School! You are the very first group of students to enter Sherwood Middle School and you have a wonderful opportunity to help create a new and exciting school. Many of the activities that we share together this year will become Sherwood traditions in the future.

The middle school concept is based on teaming: each student is placed on a team of two teachers; teachers and staff work together as a team; and students, staff and parents, work together as a team to help solve problems and increase student achievement. Remember, **T.E.A.M means Together Everyone Achieves More!**

Quality middle schools also offer a comprehensive Allied Arts Program for its students. We are excited to offer Sherwood students access to a rich and diverse Allied Arts experience. We hope you take full advantage of these wonderful and powerful educational opportunities this year.

Each student is issued a Sherwood Middle School Planner. There is space in your planner for assignments, appointments, meetings and class activities. Successful students utilize their planners in the following ways:

- Bringing their planners to school and each class everyday;
- Recording all assignments each day in all classes;
- Bringing their planners home each night as a reference to help them complete homework and other assignments.

Please return the enclosed form with your parent/guardian signature to your homeroom teacher by Friday, September 3, 2004.

We hope you have a great year!

Daniel W. Costello, Principal

Riitta M. Bolton, 5th Grade Assistant Principal

Frederick A. Randall, 6th Grade Assistant Principal

Important Dates:

Marking Periods – Sherwood Middle School will have three marking periods (trimesters) with the following dates:

First Trimester: Term ends November 18, 2004 – Report Cards Issued December 6, 2004

Second Trimester: Term ends March 3, 2005 – Report Cards Issued March 14, 2005

Third Trimester: Term ends June 9, 2005 – Report Cards Issued June 21, 2005

Parent – Teacher Conferences (No school for students!)

Fall: October 27, 2004

Spring: March 16, 2005

Professional Development Days (No school for students!)

Tuesday, October 12, Tuesday, November 2, Tuesday, January 18, Monday, March 28

School Mission

The Sherwood Middle School is in the process of developing a school mission statement that will be published and distributed during the 2004 – 2005 school year. Sherwood's mission statement will be crafted by staff, students and parents in a collaborative effort.

Expectations

The new Sherwood Middle School staff met in the spring of 2004 and articulated expectations for students and the Sherwood community as a whole.

Student Expectations

- Sherwood Middle School students are respectful of themselves, others and property.
- Sherwood Middle School students have a sense of belonging to the school community.
- Sherwood Middle School students possess a spirit of learning and growth.
- Sherwood Middle School students are motivated and take responsibility for learning.

Community Expectations

- Sherwood Middle School will be a respectful, caring community where all feel safe to learn and teach.
- Sherwood Middle School will foster a sense of community by promoting mutual respect and collaboration.
- Sherwood Middle School will maximize student achievement by having high expectations and respecting individual learning styles.
- Sherwood Middle School staff will model a positive outlook and enthusiasm for learning.

Goals

The Sherwood School Council met for the first time in June, 2004. At that meeting school goals were discussed for the 2004 – 2005 school year.

- Improve communication with parents and the community.
- Increase parent involvement in the school.
- Build a positive school culture that fosters high achievement, staff collaboration, student leadership, and community involvement.
- Collaborate with Oak Middle School to provide students with a connected 5 – 8 middle level program.

Sherwood Middle School Code of Conduct

We believe that the Sherwood Middle School is a place where students can learn to become responsible adults by making appropriate choices, while understanding that all behaviors have consequences. The Code of Conduct applies to all school activities both during the school day and after regular school hours.

We Believe

- A school needs rules of behavior to make sure that everyone can be free of distraction, fear and discomfort, so that learning can take place.
- Every member of the school community has the right to
 - work in a pleasant, safe and orderly environment.
 - be free from insulting or abusive treatment from others.
 - a community that encourages learning.
- In order for our school to be a successful learning community, everyone must know the rules, realize why they exist and understand the consequences of not following the rules.
- An environment that reinforces positive behavior facilitates change more than one that focuses on negative behavior.
- A middle school child needs to be able to make choices, even in a setting that limits freedom.
- Discipline is providing natural consequences in an effort to modify poor behavior.

Disciplinary Infractions

Sherwood Middle School developed categories for student conduct that define the offense and the possible consequences for each offense.

Level	Offense	Description
1	Disruptive Behavior	Conduct that interrupts the orderly educational procedure of the school.
1	Inappropriate Language	Using vulgar, profane or derogatory language or gestures.
1	Overdue Obligations	Late homework, library books, progress reports/report cards and parental communications.
1	Tardiness	Arriving late to class or school.
1	Inappropriate Dress	See Policy
2	Unauthorized Absence	Any absence that has not been excused by the appropriate school official.
2	Safety	Engaging in behavior that could cause physical harm; running, throwing articles, shoving, rowdiness and roughhousing.
3	Defiance of Authority (Non-Compliance)	Refusal to comply with reasonable requests of personnel or rude and discourteous behavior.
3	Bullying, Harassment, Threats, Intimidation, unsafe behaviors	Engaging in or threatening to engage in behavior that could cause physical or emotional harm. <i>This includes online threats made on a computer dealing with the safety of Sherwood Middle School students.</i>
3	Cheating	To turn in work as one's own after having obtained improper access to answers.
3	Plagiarism	To steal and use the ideas or writing of another as one's own work.
3	Forgery	Writing or using the signature or initials of another.
4	Destruction/Defacement/Stealing of Property	Destroying, damaging or taking school or personal property.
4	Fighting	A physical confrontation between two or more individuals in which the intent is to harm or injure the other.
4	Dangerous Behavior	Any behavior deemed dangerous by the school administration, including, but not limited to: threatening notes or statements, or intimidating gestures statements to any member of the Sherwood community.
5	Substance Abuse/Possession/Distribution	See Policy
5	Weapons/Bomb Threats/School Shooting Threats	See Policy

Disciplinary Consequences

Level	Range	First Occurrence	Repeated Occurrences
1	Minimum Maximum	Informal Talk PM	Conference In- School Suspension
2	Minimum Maximum	Conference Saturday School	In-School Suspension Suspension
3	Minimum Maximum	Conference Saturday School	In-School Suspension Suspension
4	Minimum Maximum	Conference/Saturday School Suspension	Suspension Expulsion
5	See Policy		

Disciplinary Definitions

Informal Talk	A staff member will talk to the student to reach an agreement regarding future behavior.
Conference	A formal conference with a school official during which the student agrees to correct his behavior. This may include parents.
PM	The student reports after school to review the circumstances and/ or complete the necessary work.
Loss of Privilege	The student may be denied participation in extra-curricular activities; removed from the cafeteria for an extended period of time, denied the opportunity to participate in special events, or be denied the use of the school bus.
Saturday School	Student is required to attend a three-hour work session on Saturday morning to personally satisfy an obligation.
In-School Suspension	The student is excluded from one or more classes, but remains at school and is expected to complete the day's assignments.
Out of School Suspension	Removal from school for 1-10 days. The parent is notified immediately.
Exclusion	An out of school suspension between 11 and 179 days. Parent/Guardian may appeal to Superintendent.
Expulsion	Expulsion from school is the responsibility of the School Superintendent.

Expulsion

The following offenses, detailed in Mass. General Laws (MGL), Chapter 71, Section 37H, may be cause for expulsion from school:

1. Any student who is found on school premises or at school sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance, as defined in MGL, Chapter 94C, including, but not limited to marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
2. Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (1) or (2) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, the principal may, in his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (1) or (2).

Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent.

When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If the student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion. The school will not be responsible for providing educational services for the period of suspension/expulsion.

Suspending Students with Special Needs

1. Suspension shall be defined as any action that results in the removal of a student from the program presented in his/her Educational Plan.
2. The Special Education Department Director will be receiving the "counselor copy" of the discipline notice when a special needs student is suspended.
3. The Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for every special needs student will indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code or if a modification is required. If a modified discipline code is required, it will be written into the IEP.
4. When it is known that the suspension(s) of a special needs student will accumulate to ten days in a school year, a review of the IEP will be held to determine the appropriateness of the student's placement or program.

Search and Seizure

Searches and seizures of students and student property will be conducted only when such search and/or seizure is deemed necessary by the school administrator who has a reasonable suspicion that a student possesses an illegal substance or weapons and to preserve order and safety in the school.

School lockers/cubbies are school property assigned to students for use during the school year. Lockers and cubbies are subject to searches by the school's administration and staff. On occasion, the police department and school administration may have trained, drug-sniffing dogs check school property and lockers/cubbies for contraband.

When violations of the law are suspected, the School Resource Officer and police officials will be contacted.

Additional Information

- Students will receive a grade of zero in cases of plagiarism and cheating.
- The school administrators reserve the right to administer disciplinary actions as deemed necessary.
- Failure of students to comply with an assigned consequence may result in students advancing to the next level of consequence.
- In cases of repeated misconduct, the school may file a Child in Need of Services (CHINS) with the Worcester Juvenile Court. Students who fall into this category, in the opinion of the school administration, will be identified as a "habitual school offender" and will be assigned a Probation Officer. The school will attend the court hearing to provide documentation for the repeated offenses.
- This code takes into consideration state guidelines for appropriate disciplinary action for all students.

Weapons

The possession of weapons in school or at a school-related event will result in an automatic suspension with an Administrative/Team/Counselor Review and parent involvement. The school Resource Officer will work with the administrative team to oversee this disciplinary action.

A student in possession of a weapon in school or at a school related event can and may be expelled from school for up to one full year.

Definition of a weapon:

A weapon is defined as any loaded or unloaded firearm, any knife, any martial arts device, any defensive weapon, or any tool or instrument which school administration could reasonably conclude as begin capable of inflicting bodily harm or which by virtue of its shape or design gives the appearance of a weapon.

Skateboards/Bicycles/Rollerblades

Students are welcome to "roll" to school each day. Students who choose to do so must use the crosswalks on the school grounds to approach the building entrance. Students must be off their wheels at the entrance of the school. Bikes are left in the rack at the front of the school, skateboards in the main office, and rollerblades stored in student lockers.

Cell Phones, Walkmen, Pagers and MP3 Players

Personal items such as these if brought to school become the sole responsibility of the student. Cell phones and pagers should be turned off upon entering the school. Should these items be lost, damaged or stolen, the sole responsibility for addressing these circumstances belongs to the student and parent. These items are not to be worn/listened to during the school day.

Sherwood Middle School Substance Abuse Policy

The possession of drugs, alcohol or tobacco in school or at a school-related event will result in an automatic suspension with an Administrative/ Team/Counselor Review and parent involvement. The school Resource Officer will work with the administrative team to oversee this disciplinary action.

A student in possession of drugs in school or at a school-related event can and may be excluded from school for up to 180 days, or he or she may be expelled.

Sherwood Middle School Dress Code:

Students and families should exercise good judgment regarding appropriate school clothing. Sherwood Middle School Administrators will determine what constitutes appropriate attire.

Guidelines:

- Shorts and/or skirts that rise several inches above the knee may be considered inappropriate for school.
- Exposed undergarments are not appropriate. Undergarments worn as clothes, and pajamas are not appropriate for school.
- **No Bs should be exposed:** backs, buttocks, bellies, breasts, boxers, briefs, bras, or bathing suits.
- Appropriate footwear is to be worn at all times. Slippers are not allowed.
- Heavy coats, extra sweaters, and oversize sweatshirts may not be worn during the school day. All outerwear should be stored in lockers or cubbies during the school day.
- Hats may be worn to school and on the bus, but must be removed when students enter the building. Students may wear hats to recess during inclement weather.
- Items that are offensive or denigrate others are not appropriate.
- Items that promote or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal or prescription drugs are not appropriate for school.

Dress Code Procedures

Students are expected to arrive at school dressed appropriately. Students who are not dressed appropriately will be sent to the Main Office to discuss the issue with the appropriate administrator.

Students will be given the opportunity to change into appropriate school attire if it is available. They may be asked to remove the article in question.

Students who do not have appropriate clothing will be asked to call a parent or guardian to provide appropriate clothing. The school will endeavor to reach parents and/or guardians by phone. It is the school's hope that parents will support the school in obtaining appropriate attire for the student for the rest of the day.

If a student is unable or unwilling to obtain proper school clothing the school will make one of the following decisions:

- Assign a PM to the student and send him or her back to class.
- Assign an in-school suspension for the rest of the day.
- Assign an in-school suspension for the rest of the day, and up to three additional days of out-of-school suspension time.
- Assign up to five days of out-of-school suspension.

Shrewsbury Public Schools Bus Policy

The Shrewsbury School Committee provides transportation for eligible students according to School Committee Policy #671. Complete information on the school committee Transportation Services Policy, Discipline Procedures, and Transportation Procedures and Regulations can be found on our district website at:

<http://www.shrewsbury-ma.gov/Schools/Central/transportation/index.html>

The code below classifies unacceptable behavior into three levels. The examples are not exhaustive but illustrative. Additionally, all consequences are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the misbehavior. All students should:

- Respect the driver and bus property.
- Enter the bus quietly and in an orderly fashion.
- Choose a seat quickly and remain seated throughout the bus ride.
- Refrain from eating and drinking on the bus.
- Use quiet voices
- Keep hands, feet and all belongings to themselves.
- Use acceptable language.

Level One	
<u>Misbehaviors</u> Misbehaviors that interfere with the orderly transportation of students. Some examples are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talking too loudly.• Failure to stay seated.• Littering on the bus.• Tampering with the possessions of other passengers.	<u>Consequences</u> The bus driver may address the misbehavior: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Verbal warning issued to student.• Assigned seats.
Level Two	
<u>Misbehaviors</u> More severe misbehaviors that interfere with the orderly transportation of students. Some examples are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annoying and/or bullying other passengers.• Littering the bus-repeat offense.• Tampering with the possessions of other passengers-repeat offense.• Use of profanity.• Damage to the bus.	<u>Consequences</u> The bus driver reports misbehaviors on the bus. The principal or designee administers consequences. This action may include any of all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conference with principal or designee.• Contact with parents.• Assigned seats.• Loss of bus privileges for up to five days.• Suspension from school for up to five days.

Level Three	
<u>Misbehaviors</u> Behavior that endangers the safety of the driver or students and which impairs the driver's ability to drive safely. Some examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated occurrences of Level 1 or 2 behaviors. • Refusal to remain in seat. • Throwing objects, spitting, or spit balls, or damaging property. • Distracting the driver. • Fighting, including pushing and/or wrestling. • Lighting matches/lighters. • Possession of knives or other dangerous objects. • Possession or use of tobacco, alcohol, drugs or controlled substances. 	<u>Consequences</u> The bus driver reports misbehaviors on the bus. The principal or designee administers consequences. At more severe levels, the superintendent or designee may be involved. This action may include any or all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of bus privileges for up to six to ten days. • Suspension from school for up to six to ten days. • Repeated incidents of Level 2 behavior may result in a child being permanently suspended from bus privileges. • Illegal activity will be referred to the Shrewsbury Police Department.

Procedures for Reporting Passenger Misconduct

- The bus driver will report misconduct occurring on the school bus to the appropriate personnel.
- A School Bus Conduct Report will be completed and submitted to the bus company operations manger, who will then forward it to the appropriate school principal for action.
- The principal or designee and the bus company will retain copies of the signed report. In some cases students may report passenger misconduct. If so, the student would report the misconduct to her or his teacher.

Attendance Policies

Attendance Philosophy

Regular attendance is an essential part of each student's educational experience. Daily contact with teachers and other students is a vital part of each student's intellectual and social growth. Regular attendance and participation in class should lead to a valuable learning experience; the faculty and administration believe that this participation is an essential part of learning and grade evaluation.

State Law Regarding Student Attendance at Public School

Massachusetts General Law (MGL Chapter 76, Section 2) mandates that all Massachusetts' children attend school (or home schooling program) until the age 16. "Every person in control of a child, described in section 1, shall cause him to attend school as therein required, and, if he fails so to do for seven day sessions or fourteen half day sessions within any period of six months, he shall, on complaint by a supervisor of attendance, be punished by a fine of not more than 20 dollars."

Massachusetts General Law (MGL Chapter 17, Section 4) states, "Whoever induces or attempts to induce a minor to absent himself unlawfully from school, or unlawfully employs him or harbors a minor, who, while school is in session, is absent unlawfully therefrom, shall be punished by a fine of not more than two hundred dollars."

Student Absence Policy

When a student is absent from school, it is the parent/guardian responsibility to contact the school. Parent/guardians should call the school at the earliest time possible to report the student absence. The school number is 508.841.8670. The Child Safe absence number is 508.841.8690.

When a student is absent without parental notification, the office staff will endeavor to reach a parent/guardian to confirm the child's absence. It is vital that families provide the school with accurate contact phone numbers.

After a student's fifth absence during any term, the school will notify the family in writing regarding the student's status. At that time the school may require a doctor's note explaining the absences, or may request a meeting with the parent/guardian. Additionally, the school may contact the School Resource Officer to investigate the situation.

After the student's tenth absence during any term, the school may do any of the following:

- 1) Contact the family in writing addressing the excessive absences;
- 2) Contact the Worcester County Juvenile Court regarding a Child In Need of Services (CHINS) order;
- 3) Contact the Massachusetts Department of Social Services (DSS) regarding a 51A neglect charge against the parent/guardian; or
- 4) Contact the School Resource Officer to conduct an investigation regarding the excessive absences.

Illness or family emergencies are the only reasons for excused absences from school.

Truancy will result in two days of Saturday School for each day truant. **Repeated truancy** could result in a referral to juvenile court (CHINS) by the school administration and the attendance officer, or to DSS for child neglect.

Student Tardy Policy

It is important for students to arrive to school on time. Students are expected to report on time for class or any scheduled school activity.

After a student accumulates three unexcused tardies during any term, a conference will be held with the student and a school administrator. After a fourth unexcused tardy of any term, a letter will be sent home to parents addressing the excessive tardies. After a fifth unexcused tardy of any term, the student will be issued a Saturday School assignment.

After the student's tenth unexcused tardy during any term, the school may do any of the following:

- 1) Contact the family in writing addressing the excessive tardies;
- 2) Contact the Worcester County Juvenile Court regarding a Child In Need of Services (CHINS) order;
- 3) Contact the Massachusetts Department of Social Services (DSS) regarding a 51A neglect charge against the parent/guardian; or
- 4) Contact the School Resource Officer to conduct an investigation regarding the excessive tardiness.

Technology Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

- I will use the Internet, school computers and e-mail for educationally relevant purposes.
- I will only use bookmarked sites unless my teacher or another authorized adult supervises my use of a search engine for approved research.
- I will respect the rights of copyright owners and will not plagiarize work that I find on the Internet.
- I will only use appropriate language and will not send, forward, access or post any material that is likely to be offensive, personal, or threatening to recipients or viewers.
- I will not download any files or execute attachments from unknown sources that I did not request or expect to receive.
- I will not use e-mail, enter any chat rooms or use instant messaging without permission from my teacher.
- I will respect all school hardware and never load software or do anything to damage any equipment.
- I will never send any personal information about me or anyone else without first checking with my teacher. Personal information includes pictures, names, addresses, e-mail addresses, home phone numbers or location of my school.
- I will not leave an account open or unattended nor trespass, delete or tamper with anyone else's files, folders, or work.
- I will promptly inform a teacher if any messages I receive are inappropriate.
- I understand network files are not private. Network administrators may view the contents at any time in order to maintain system integrity.
- I agree to maintain any disk quota space provided to me, including school email resources.
- I understand that should I violate this contract, the consequences could be the revocation of all network access, suspension from school, and legal action by the authorities.

All students must read, understand and agree to abide by this Acceptable Use Agreement (AUP). Students who do not return the signed AUP form at the end of this handbook, will not be allowed to use the Sherwood Middle School computer system in any way.

What else do students need to know?

WHAT IF. . .

...you are late for school? If you are late to school you should have a signed note from a parent or guardian explaining the reason for being late. You will be given a tardy slip that will admit you to class. Excessive tardiness is not acceptable. Please refer to the Sherwood Middle School attendance policy.

...you have to get dismissed early from school? You must bring in a signed note to the attendance window in the morning. You will receive a dismissal slip. When it is time to be dismissed, you will show this slip to the teacher, and then bring the slip to the attendance window where you will be dismissed.

...you get sick or injured during school time? The school nurse will decide if there is a need to leave school or seek further medical attention. In such cases, parents or guardians will be notified. This is one reason accurate and up to date emergency information is needed. You are not to call home to ask a parent to come to pick you up. The nurse will handle this.

...you must contact your parents? A pay telephone is available to students and is located in the lobby near the front door. You should have fifty cents with you for such calls. The best time to make calls is at lunchtime. You may not make calls at the end of the day. You are not allowed to make calls from the main office unless it is an emergency.

...you forget your lunch money? The school does not want any student to go without eating lunch. Should you forget your lunch money and cannot make arrangements with home, then the cafeteria manager will have a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and milk available. This lunch must be paid for the next day.

...you lose money or personal items? If you lose money or personal items, your teachers and/or someone in the main office should be notified as soon as possible. You should also check the lost and found box in the main office. You should not bring large sums of money or any valuable item to school.

...you lose or damage a textbook or a library book? You are responsible for all books given to you during the year. Cover your texts and keep them covered to protect them from damage. You must pay for any book that is lost or damaged during the time that you have it signed out to you. The replacement costs of many of our school books can be as high as \$60.

...you are given a PM (after school detention)? A PM can be assigned by a teacher or an administrator. PM's have to be handled on an individual basis, that is, the school must be sure that any student who stays after school has been able to make arrangements to get home safely. For that reason, an assigned PM usually means that you have the responsibility to make your parent or guardian aware of the PM so you can be picked up at the end of the day. If this cannot be done the parent must get in touch with the teacher or administrator to work out an alternate solution.

...you are not sure whether or not there is school because of a bad storm? When it becomes necessary to cancel school or delay the opening of school because of poor weather there will be announcements on several radio and TV stations. Please listen for these announcements and **do not call the school.**

Context

The homework policy of the Shrewsbury Public Schools derives from the work of a study committee over two years (2000-2002). During that period, the committee reviewed the literature on homework, surveyed teachers, parents, and students, and engaged faculties and parent groups in discussions on the topic. During the course of the study, it became apparent that teachers and parents supported homework as an important part of the educational process. It was also clear that there was insufficient consensus on the purposes and implementation of homework in the district.

There are many learning activities in the life of a student in addition to homework. School activities, athletic and cultural events, and other personal interests are all important in the growth and development of children. The homework policy of the Shrewsbury Schools is provided as a guide to balance homework with the realities of family life in the 21st century.

The most effective implementation of the homework policy will occur when teachers, parents, and students appreciate the importance of good communication among those involved. The mission of the Shrewsbury Public Schools urges that the schools work "in partnership with the community." Such a partnership is particularly important in the area of homework.

The homework policy deals solely with grades one through eight. Information about homework at the high school level is contained in the high school planner/handbook.

In kindergarten, homework is sometimes offered as enrichment. While there is no formal kindergarten homework, families should read daily with their child to foster language and literacy skills.

Homework is defined as written or non-written tasks that are assigned by teachers to be completed by students outside of the classroom. The purposes of homework in the Shrewsbury Schools are to practice newly taught skills, review previously mastered skills, develop independent study habits, and extend and enrich the curriculum. Homework should be related to the curriculum of the school and promote an understanding of the importance of lifelong learning. Additional academic homework will not be used as a behavior management tool or as a form of punishment. **Finally, homework should not be done by parents.**

Homework may be given four nights per week in grades 1-4 and should not be assigned on weekends. Homework may be assigned on Fridays in grades 5-8. Reading assignments are to be incorporated into the time allotments at each grade level. Because reading is crucial to academic success, voluntary reading beyond homework guidelines is encouraged. Long-term projects should be assigned at least two weekends before the work is due.

Homework guidelines for some students with special needs may be determined by the student's educational plan and should be specifically related to the student's learning profile. The modifications in an educational plan supersede the general guidelines listed here.

Time Allocations per Grade Level

The guidelines below provide the appropriate time limits that children at each grade level should devote to homework each night. Parents are encouraged to speak with their children's teachers if homework time is routinely exceeding the guidelines.

Grade 1	15 minutes	Monday – Thursday
Grade 2	20 minutes	Monday – Thursday
Grade 3	30 minutes	Monday – Thursday
Grade 4	40 minutes	Monday – Thursday
Grade 5	50 minutes	Monday – Friday
Grade 6 – 8	60 – 90 minutes	Monday – Friday

Students’ Roles and Responsibilities

- Get the assignment and be able to ask for help if the assignment is not clear.
- Copy all assignments into planner (grades 4-8), carefully recording due dates, and important information.
- Set a time each day to do homework.
- Check work and, if possible, explain it to an adult.
- Maintain the highest quality work on homework assignments.
- Take home all necessary resources, such as packets, textbooks, notes and study guides to accurately complete homework.
- Bring the completed homework back to school when it is due.
- Be responsible for getting assignments when absent from school.
- Be responsible for taking care of, and returning, any borrowed resource materials.

Parents’ Role and Responsibilities

- Promote a positive attitude toward homework as part of the learning process.
- Understand and reinforce expectations for the quality of student work.
- Provide structure, a place, and tools needed to help the child organize for the completion of homework.
- Be available to provide supervision, but do not do the assignment for the child.
- Have an understanding of the amount of assistance appropriate for homework assignments.
- Communicate often with the student and his/her teacher, giving feedback to the teacher when there is a homework concern.
- Learn strategies/techniques for helping the student through opportunities such as parent homework clinics.

Teachers' Role and Responsibilities

- Identify the purpose of homework assignments for parents and students.
- Establish objectives and guidelines for special projects, including any expectations for parent participation.
- Follow the guidelines for the amount of time designated for homework including special projects.
- Communicate expectations to students.
- Post all assignments and provide time for students to record them.
- Model homework strategies and provide models as appropriate throughout the school year.
- Review homework and return it in a timely manner.
- Establish a system for recording and reporting homework.
- Ensure that resources and materials required for homework projects are easily obtained by the student.
- Provide ways for parents to communicate with teachers about homework.
- Notify parents regarding homework problems and missing assignments.
- Assign long-term projects so that the completion time includes more than one weekend, and is not limited to a school vacation period.
- Discuss homework practice with colleagues and provide guidelines for the type of homework at each grade level in each school.

Administrators' Role and Responsibilities

- Ensure that homework is consistent with the educational goals of the Shrewsbury Public Schools.
- Facilitate communication between classroom and specialist teachers concerning homework.
- Monitor and support the teachers in the implementation of the homework guidelines.
- Encourage teachers to use homework as a tool to reinforce learning.
- Be aware of the assignment of major projects and their impact on the student's overall educational program.
- Support the need for balance among the many learning activities in the life of a student besides homework.
- Facilitate the communication process between the school and home, and help maintain the parent/school partnership on homework.

Lunch and Breakfast Information

Breakfast Program

A Breakfast Program is offered daily at the Middle Schools before the school day begins. A variety of cereals, fruits, pastries, morning breads, yogurts, juice and milk are offered daily. All meals meet the USDA requirements for good nutrition. The cost of breakfast is \$1.25. Families with financial need may qualify for a reduced price breakfast at \$.30 or a free breakfast.

Lunch Program

A Lunch Program is offered daily at the Middle School. A minimum of two entrees is offered daily. In addition a variety of sandwiches, soups, milks, juice, fruits, vegetables, breads and a salad bar are offered daily. All meals meet the USDA nutritional guidelines. The cost of lunch is \$2.25. Families with financial need may qualify for a reduced price lunch at \$.40 or a free lunch.

Free and Reduced Breakfast/Lunch Applications

Free and reduced meals are available to students if there is financial need. Applications will be sent home to all families in the fall. Applications must be submitted yearly in the fall. If you need an application at any time during the year call the Food Service Office at 508-841-8819 and one will be mailed to you. Eligibility is governed by guidelines set by the Department of Education. A written notification will be sent to all families stating what program they qualify for.

Menus

Menus are sent home monthly in your child's Monday Folder. The monthly menu is printed in the *Chronicle*. The Food Service Department is committed to serving what is on the printed menu. The menu is also available on the SPS web site:

<http://www.shrewsbury-ma.gov/Schools/Central/SchLunch/schoollunch.htm>

Cafeteria Expectations

Because there are so many students in the cafeteria at one time it can become very noisy and confusing. Therefore, it is important that you obey all the rules of the cafeteria.

- You must enter in an orderly manner.
- You are expected to be **courteous** and **respectful** at all times to those who work in the kitchen and those teachers who are on lunch duty.
- Students will be required to wipe the tables at the end of each lunch.
- The floor should remain clean of food, papers, etc. It is your responsibility to keep your area clean.
- This is your lunchroom and it is your responsibility to keep it clean.
- All students are responsible for knowing these rules and abiding by them.

Prepaid Lunch Plan

The Prepaid Lunch Plan is available for the 2004-2005 school year. Meals at the Middle School cost \$2.25. Books of 20 \$2.25 lunch tickets can be purchased for \$45.00. Tickets for the Middle Schools are orange.

To purchase tickets send a self addressed stamped envelope along with your check for the number of books requested to: Shrewsbury School Food Service, 64 Holden Street, Shrewsbury, MA. 01545. Tickets will be mailed back to you. Tickets are non- refundable.

Tickets may also be purchased at the School Department Office at the Town Hall. Tickets will be sold Monday- Friday from 8 am - 4:30 pm. Tickets must be purchased by the book. Checks will be the only type of payment accepted- no cash or credit cards. Tickets are honored from one school year to another.

Food Service Department

Please contact the Food Service Department with any questions, suggestions, or ideas. The Food Service Department is located at Shrewsbury High School, 64 Holden Street, Shrewsbury, MA 01545. The telephone number is 508 -841-8819. The Middle Schools have managers on site available to speak with you.

The Nurse

The school nurse's office is located next to the main office. You should go to the nurse when you are not feeling well or medication is needed. In any event the teacher whose class you are to be in at that time must know that you are with the nurse. It is your responsibility to tell the teacher.

The school and the nurse are not responsible for the dispensation of any medication except for prescriptions that must be administered during school hours by the school nurse.

Medications will be dispensed that:

- are brought into school by your parent
- have a doctor's written statement that the dispensation of the medication during school time is necessary for the physical or mental health of the student.

The school nurse will be responsible for determining whether the medication to be dispensed falls within the parameters of the policy. If it does not, she will notify the parents, and, if necessary, seek the assistance of the principal in explaining the policy to the parent.

A student can only be sent home during the day by the nurse. If she feels that you are sick enough to have to go home, she will contact a parent to come into school to pick you up. No one else can do this. Students are not to call a parent on their own to pick them up.

Student Lockers

Lockers will be assigned on the first day of school by homeroom teachers. It is your responsibility to keep your locker clean and neat. Lockers are not to be written on or defaced in any way. Stickers are not to be placed on a locker or inside the locker. Locks are not to be damaged in any way.

Students in the modular section of the school (rooms 101 –111) will not be assigned lockers. Students in this section of the building will have cubbies. All the rules applying to lockers will apply to cubbies.

You are the only one who can open your locker as long as you do not give your combination to anyone else. **Remember:** school is not a place to bring valuable things that you care about. As long as these kinds of things stay at home, there is no chance of something happening--like having them lost or stolen--at school. Neither Sherwood Middle School, nor the Shrewsbury School Department is liable for possessions stolen or missing from lockers or personal belongings. Remember, if it is very valuable to you, you probably shouldn't bring it to school.

SPS Promotion and Retention Policy

Shrewsbury Public Schools
School Committee Policy 581
Progress and Evaluation of Students

Promotion and Retention of Students

It is the intent of the Shrewsbury Public Schools, through the policies and procedures described below, to provide appropriate support to students who are experiencing academic difficulties. Students who demonstrate a substantial risk of failure in major academic subjects, and for whom teachers have already made instructional modifications and sought parent* involvement, will be referred to the Instructional Support Team (IST) by mid-year! Within the context of the regular education support services available, systematic remediation in the areas of literacy, mathematics, or behavioral performance will be provided and periodically reviewed by the team. Students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) will be supported by their special education teams.

The promotion/retention policy of the Shrewsbury Public Schools is part of the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP). The District Curriculum Accommodation Plan summarizes the resources and programs available to allow all children access to the full curriculum of the district. Only after the provision of support services consistent with the district DCAP, and a determination that a student is not able to make effective progress, will the retention of a student be considered. This policy recognizes that retention is complex, involving many factors, and is never a guarantee of future success. Retention will be considered only after other alternatives have been unsuccessful.

Promotion from grade to grade is based primarily upon a student's satisfactory academic achievement and good attendance record! Students considered for retention are those who have not achieved the minimum standards expected for the respective grade level and/or those who have not fulfilled attendance requirements. In any decision that affects retention, the school will share this policy with parents and staff, and adhere to all state and local regulations as they pertain to the rights of the individuals involved.

The intent of the school district is to fully inform students and parents of the necessary steps to avoid retention. The parents of any student who may not be promoted have the right to ask for a meeting with the principal. Middle school students will be placed in the next grade upon the successful completion of pre-approved summer school courses. High school students who complete approved summer school courses, in accordance with credit requirements, will also be placed in the next grade level.

Elementary Grades

Principals, in consultation with the Instructional Support Team, may retain students in their current grade for the subsequent school year. Retention will be considered only after other alternatives (based on IST recommendations) have been attempted. Staff will provide regular communications with the parent during the course of the school year as issues relating to a student's success begin to surface. The recommendation to retain a student shall be made, in writing to the child's parents, by May 1st. Parents who wish their child to advance to the next grade level may appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent of schools. The appeal to the superintendent should be made within ten days of the principal's letter. (The special education team will make the recommendation to the principal for promotion/retention of special education students.)

Middle School

Prior to a student's assignment to the next grade, the following four areas will be reviewed and assessed by middle school personnel:

1. The skills and knowledge demonstrated by the student in the current grade.
2. The student's readiness for work at the next grade level.
3. The student's attendance record.
4. The student's success with additional support that has been provided.

The principal, in consultation with the Instructional Support Team, may retain students in their current grade for the subsequent school year. Retention will be considered, however, only after other alternatives (e.g., IST recommendations) have been implemented. Based on all of the data gathered, a student will be recommended for retention if he/she is at risk of failing two or more core subjects for the school year, as reported on the progress report. Middle school students failing two (2) or more core academic subjects (English, math, science, and social studies) can be retained in grade unless an approved summer program is successfully completed. (Grades in the student's foreign language class will also be considered in determining the student's placement for the subsequent year.) A letter stating the reasons for retention shall be sent to the parents(s) by the principal by May 1st. (The special education team will make the recommendation to the principal for the promotion/retention of special education students.)

In all cases, the parents of a student being considered for retention shall be kept informed throughout the year. Teachers shall initiate a parent conference whenever it is determined that a student may be failing two subjects. Weekly progress reports (email, notes, telephone calls, etc.) shall also be utilized to keep parents informed. The decision for promotion or retention of those recommended students shall rest with the building principal. Parents who wish their child to advance to the next grade level may appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent of schools. The appeal to the superintendent should be made within ten days of the principal's letter.

High School

1. In order to continue with his/her class:
 - A freshman must earn at least 21 credits by September to be classified as a sophomore.
 - A sophomore must earn at least 45 credits by September to be classified as a junior.
 - A junior must earn at least 73 credits by September to be classified as a senior.
2. Teachers, the guidance counselor and grade administrator of a student experiencing academic difficulty will review the student's progress and make appropriate plans with the student prior to the conclusion of the school year.
3. Students who pass approved summer school courses may apply these credits to be promoted to the next grade level.

**Parent is used in this document and refers to guardians as well.*

Adopted 6/18/03

We have read, discussed, understand, and agree
to abide by the content of the Sherwood Middle
School 2004 – 2005 Student Handbook;

including the Sherwood Middle School
Code of Conduct
& Acceptable Use Policy.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Team: _____

Homeroom # and Teacher: _____

Date: _____

Return to your homeroom teacher by
Friday, September 3, 2004.